

Together  
we save  
lives.



versiti™



Every three seconds,  
someone in America needs a blood transfusion

Every ten minutes,  
another person joins a transplant waiting list.

And every year,  
transfusion medicine saves more than  
four and a half million lives in America.

Versiti was founded with the belief that together, our blood centers can better serve people's urgent need for life-saving healthcare. That we can strengthen and restore the health of our communities while conducting groundbreaking research.

# Service Lines

## **Blood Services**

Ensures a safe and stable blood supply for hospitals.

## **Diagnostic Laboratories**

Performs specialized testing for hospitals and physicians to diagnose blood and genetic disorders and to match donors and patients in need of transplants.

## **Medical Sciences Institute**

Dedicated to patient care, clinical research and education of physicians in adult and pediatric blood health.

## **Blood Research Institute**

A premier center for the investigation of blood-related diseases and conditions like sickle cell disease and leukemia.

## **Organ and Tissue Donation**

Combines procurement services and education to enhance the lives of patients and provide guidance to the families of potential donors.

## **Marrow and Stem Cell Donation**

Facilitates marrow and stem cell donations to patients worldwide.

# Blood Donation

Of the entire U.S. population, only 5% donate blood. And of that 5%, only a small fraction have a blood type called Ro, which is particularly beneficial for patients with sickle cell disease. Because sickle cell disease predominantly affects African Americans, there is a great need for ethnically diverse donors. And many patients say they feel the most healthy when they receive blood from donors of similar ethnic backgrounds.

“I didn’t think it was important until I needed it.”

In 2008, Rochelle was rushed to urgent care because of heavy bleeding. Not only did she learn that she was pregnant, but also that she just had a miscarriage.

Still carrying that devastating news, Rochelle was still bleeding two weeks later and returned to the hospital. She needed a blood transfusion immediately. Rochelle received three units of blood and thanks to blood donors, is alive and well today.

“Whenever I can, I always try to donate blood,” says Rochelle. “I want to be the person to save a life as once was done for me.”



# Sickle Cell Research

Investigators at Versiti Blood Research Institute are on the forefront of blood health advances for sickle cell disease (SCD). Versiti conducts a variety of clinical research in SCD, and Investigator Joshua Field, MD, regularly treats patients at the Adult Sickle Cell Clinic in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Porscha Burks was diagnosed with sickle cell disease when she was 4 years old. As she got older, the painful episodes caused by the disease became more frequent and difficult to recover from. In 2011, Porscha met Versiti's Joshua Field, MD, at the Adult Sickle Cell Clinic, where she now receives regular blood transfusions every four weeks that help manage her pain.



# Organ Donation

Only 25% of Hispanics and African Americans who reside in Milwaukee are registered organ, tissue and eye donors. Increasing that statistic is crucial, as successful transplantation is often enhanced by matching organs between people of the same ethnic groups. Nationally, African Americans are the largest group of ethnically diverse patients in need of organ transplants. And in 2018, 16.4% of all transplant recipients were of Hispanic origin.

Juan Rodriguez was the closest Alberto Uscanga's family had to a grandfather. Juan was riding his beloved Harley to Alberto's house when he suffered a severe stroke that left him brain dead. However, as a registered organ donor, Juan donated his liver to someone in need. Now, Alberto proudly rides Juan's Harley in his memory.



# Bone Marrow Donation

Versiti is connected to the Be The Match national bone marrow donor registry, which helps connect bone marrow donors with patients in need. Successful matches are most often found between people of similar ethnic backgrounds, which means that people of color often have difficulty finding a compatible donor on the registry. Increasing the diversity of the registry is a matter of life and death for these patients.

Tia Wilson's family has been deeply affected by sickle cell disease. Not only does Tia have it, but her brother, cousin and aunt all died from complications from the disease. Tia began receiving blood and platelet transfusions at 3 years old to manage her pain, and in 2015, received the life-saving gift of a bone marrow transplant from another of her brothers.



# Get Inv

## Adopt Versiti as Your Cause of Choice

- Make an appointment to donate blood at a Versiti donor center or mobile drive ([versiti.org](https://www.versiti.org))
- Join the organ and tissue donor registry ([donatelife.net](https://donatelife.net))
- Join the Be The Match bone marrow donor registry ([join.bethematch.org/versiti](https://join.bethematch.org/versiti))
- Donate to the Versiti Blood Research Institute Foundation ([versiti.org/financial-giving](https://www.versiti.org/financial-giving))
- Donate your time and volunteer ([versiti.org/volunteer](https://www.versiti.org/volunteer))

## Host a Drive

- Host a blood drive, marrow donor registry drive, or organ and tissue donor registry drive at your school, office or community center

## Work at Versiti

- Connect program participants with Versiti internships and careers
- Work with like-minded, mission-driven individuals
- Enhance the lives of donors and patients in diverse communities
- Support Versiti's life-saving mission

# Involved!

## Be a Community Advocate

- Participate in a workplace campaign, like the Health Resources and Service Administration's Workplace Partnership for Life program
- Coordinate educational sessions in your community with Versiti experts
- Plan events and activities in your community that support Versiti's life-saving mission
- Join a community advisory board and have a say in the direction of our outreach
- Sign up your church congregation to join our Churches for Organ Donation Education and Registration (CodeR) program!

## Student and Youth Engagement Opportunities

- Participate in scholarship opportunities for high school students
- Earn high school graduation cords for supporting blood drives and recruiting donors
- Get middle and elementary school students involved with the Junior Lifesavers Program
- Bring Versiti to your high school classroom to host educational sessions about Organ & Tissue Donation and Registration!

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **Q: Can I donate blood if I take medication?**

A: Yes. Most medications will not defer you from donating blood.

## **Q: If I register as an organ donor, does that mean doctors won't try to save my life if I'm hurt or sick?**

A: No. Doctors will do everything in their power to save your life. It's only after all life-saving measures have been exhausted that patients are evaluated as organ donors.

## **Q: Does donating my organs mean I won't get into heaven?**

A: All major religions support organ donation and see it as a final gift of life to others.

## **Q: If I donate blood, will my personal information become public knowledge?**

A: No. When you donate blood, Versiti checks for blood type and runs tests to ensure it's safe to give to patients. If we notice something during this process that may affect you, we will contact you privately. Your private information is never shared with the government or blood recipients.

**Q: Does being a bone marrow donor mean I have to have surgery and the removal of bones?**

A: No. Most marrow donations involve a nonsurgical procedure that involves extracting blood-forming cells via a needle in the arm—much like donating blood. No bones are removed from the donor's body.

**Q: Is donating bone marrow painful?**

A: Bone marrow donation is done under general anesthesia. Most donors return home the same day and are back to their usual activities within a week.

**versiti.org**